

# 庚子正教聖殉教者

## THE CHINESE NEW MARTYRS



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### **Holy Orthodox Metropolis of Boston**

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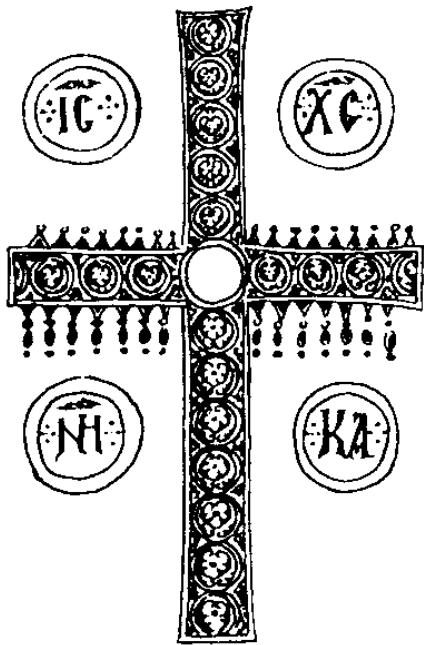
*And the remainder of Matins, and the dismissal.*

*Megalynarion*

China hath received your martyric bones; \* Heaven, your elect souls \* burning brightly with love of God. \* And as we extol you \* and laud your great confession, \* we all receive divine joy, for ye stand in our midst.

*Megalynarion of Saint Paul the Catechist*

Having been the teacher of Christian truth, \* valiant Paul the Martyr \* also died for the Faith he taught; \* hence he is called great now \* in Christ's eternal Kingdom, \* for truly he both kept and taught all his Lord's commands.



## The Holy Orthodox Martyrs of China: An Historical Background

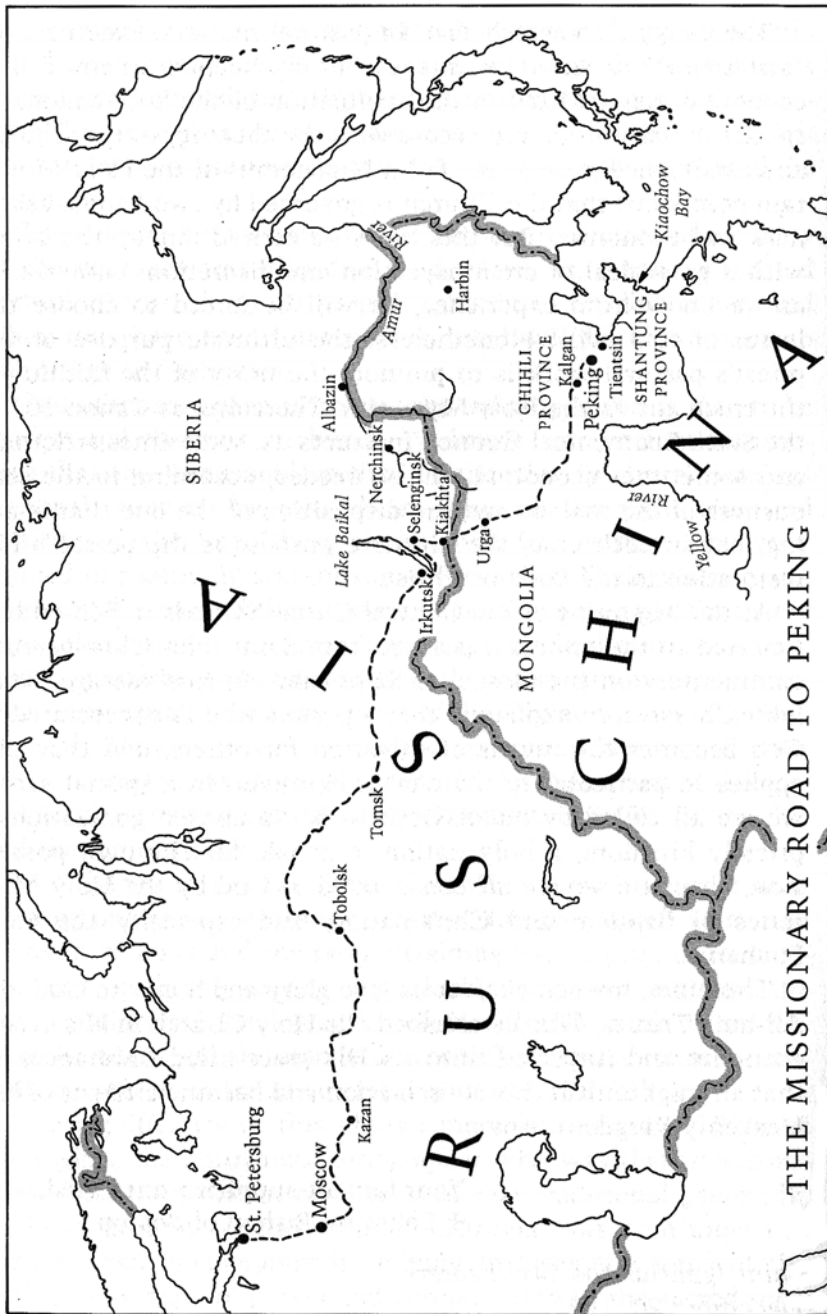
by the Holy Transfiguration Monastery

*Many Orthodox Christians are perhaps aware that they have Chinese brethren that suffered martyrdom during the Boxer Rebellion of 1900; but few know how the Orthodox Faith had once been brought from Russia to Peking, how a native Chinese Orthodox flock grew, and in what historical context over two hundred Chinese Orthodox Christians witnessed to their faith with their lives. The following sketch is offered as explanation, for the glory of God and the praise of His Saints.*

### *Origins of the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Peking*

The second half of the seventeenth century found the Russian empire expanding to the east and southeast, bringing it increasingly into contact with China. Fortifying their penetration into eastern Siberia, the Russians built fortresses around Lake Baikal in Selenginsk and Irkutsk, farther east in Nerchinsk, and—their easternmost garrison at the time—along the Amur River at Albazin in 1651.

Russian expansion did not escape the notice of the Manchus, who, after invading Peking from the north and supplanting the Ming dynasty, had ruled China since 1644 as the Ch'ing dynasty. In 1685, the Chinese conquered Albazin and took captive a large number of Cossacks and Orthodox Albazinians. Of these, forty-five entered the service of the Chinese Emperor, and were taken to Peking; their priest, Father Maximus Leontiev, was compelled to accompany them, and brought with him a wonderworking icon of Saint Nicholas. By the end of the year they reached Peking, where



entreat Him to grant us \* to perform His commandments, \* that we all may find mercy \* when He shall come in His glory.

*Theotokion*

The Prophet named Him Orient \* Who dawned forth from a Virgin \* as from a cloudless firmament \* and brought light to the whole world \* and shined His truth on East and West, \* to the earth's remotest ends. \* Now with the Mother that bare Him, \* like to orient gemstones \* cut and polished in torments, \* the Martyrs blaze with His glory.

*For the Praises we chant the following Stichera:*

*Second Tone. O house of Ephratha*

Lo, in the farthest East, \* there where the sun ariseth, \* a host of brilliant Martyrs \* hath dawned forth and illumined the whole world with the light of truth.

China, now put away \* thine idols and thy sages, \* and glory in thy Martyrs, \* who hallow thee and cleanse thee of centuries of heathendom.

Righteous Metrophanes, \* and all ye martyred with him, \* entreat the King of Glory \* to pardon us and grant us to be with you and all the Saints.

*Glory. Plagal of Fourth Tone*

Ye are the glory of the martyrs and the joy of the angels; ye are the boast of the Orthodox and the purification of China; ye are the comfort of the faithful and the downfall of demons; ye are servants no longer, but Christ calleth you brethren, who have laid hold on adoption through the violence ye suffered. Ye are bold intercessors for us sinners, who cry to you: Intercede with the Lord, that He have mercy on our souls.

*Both now. Theotokion*

Lady do thou receive the supplications of thy slaves, and deliver us from every affliction and necessity.

\* is stablished firm for ever \* upon the firm foundation-stone of Christ.

As we now kiss your icon with fervent love, \* and seek after your succour in all the hardships of this life, \* lighten ye our burden, which presseth down; \* and mortify our carnal mind, \* shine the fear of God in our sinful hearts, \* that by your intercessions \* and love and strong protection, \* we all may find repentance ere the end.

No hymn can praise your greatness and not fall short, \* but accept these our hymns with the love whereby they were inspired; \* be with us throughout all our earthly life; \* and when the hour of death arrive, \* come ye, stand beside us, receive our souls; \* defend us from accusers, \* and in the day of judgment \* entreat the Lord to overlook our sins.

#### *Theotokion*

O comeliness of Jacob, whom God hath loved, \* whom He chose for Himself as the way whereby He dwelt with men, \* Virgin Theotokos, disdain us not; \* for though our sins exceed the sands, \* nothing can exceed thine exceeding love; \* thy childbirth passeth nature, \* thy mercy passeth telling; \* the only greater love than thine is God's.

#### *Heirmos*

The heavens were astonished and stood in awe \* and the ends of the earth, Maid, were sore amazed; for God appeared \* bodily to mankind as very man. \* And lo, thy womb hath proved to be \* vaster and more spacious than heaven's heights. \* For this, O Theotokos, \* the choirs and assemblies \* of men and Angels magnify thy name.

#### EXAPOSTILARION

##### *Third Tone. While standing in the Temple's courts*

Rejoice, Father Metrophanes, \* with Tatiana, Esaias; \* Maria, Paul, and John the child; \* Clement, Anna, and Ia; \* Matthew and Vitus and the rest, \* ye whose names are known to God. \* Do ye

the Emperor K'ang-hsi<sup>1</sup> graciously received them, and granted Father Maximus an old Buddhist temple to convert into a chapel for the spiritual needs of the newly-established Russian settlement.

"Thus the first missionary of the Russian Orthodox, contrary to his own will, settled himself at the north-eastern corner of the Manchu city where he lived for twenty years, serving the spiritual needs of his little flock."<sup>2</sup> In addition to this, the Russian Orthodox Albazinians were received by the Emperor into his honor guard, which the Manchus divided into eight divisions or "banners." The Albazinian captives were admitted to one of the three most prestigious banners, which was in the northeast corner of Peking, were shown respect and trust by the Emperor, and were allowed to practise their faith unhindered. Their service to the Emperor never sent them to war against their fellow Russians; they served him for the most part as craftsmen. The Albazinians were masters in the manufacture of the birch bows used by the Manchus, and eventually the area near their church came to be known as "birch-bark square."<sup>3</sup>

Why did the Ch'ing Emperor, the "Son of Heaven," show such benevolence to his captives as to allow them a Buddhist temple for a church in the Imperial city of Peking, and to admit many of them into his own service?<sup>4</sup> The Manchus had ruled China for only half a century, and as non-Chinese invaders from the north, they were still in the process of establishing themselves as legitimate heirs to the Ming dynasty that they had overthrown, of subduing China to themselves, and of seeking supremacy over their neighboring countries. By bringing the Cossacks and Albazinians, Russian subjects, to Peking as captives, and then generously taking them under his wing,

<sup>1</sup> "The K'ang-hsi emperor" would be more correct and in accord with modern scholarly usage, since "K'ang-hsi" (and below, "Yung-cheng" and so forth) is not his personal name, which is rarely used to identify an emperor, but the title given his reign. To avoid confusion, however, we have chosen to use the more traditional English formula, which is still found in scholarly writings.

<sup>2</sup> Archimandrite Innocent, p. 678.

<sup>3</sup> Dudgeon, p. 42.

<sup>4</sup> This is one of the principal questions examined in Widmer's study; see Bibliography below.

the Emperor K'ang-hsi was opening a diplomatic channel with which to deal with Russia, and doing it in such a way as to make Russia appear more a vassal state than another empire on equal footing with the Manchus. Furthermore, when other Mongol peoples saw the honor shown the Albazinians, they might be disposed to consider submission to the Manchus more profitable than resistance.

To the Russians, the Mission would be a much-coveted opening in Peking, at a time when European powers had not yet been able to force China to grant them diplomatic residences and trading rights; to the Manchus, it would be evidence that under them, no less than under the dynasties they succeeded, China, the "Middle Kingdom," continued to be the center of the universe and source of all civilization, to the emperor of which all the world came and kowtowed. For the first century and a half of its existence, the Russian settlement in Peking was, for both the Chinese and Russian governments, a political entity and little else.

In 1696, some ten years after the Russians had arrived in Peking, Ignatius, metropolitan of Tobolsk, sent them a letter of credence, an antimension for the altar, and holy chrism; and the chapel—hitherto called the Nikolsky church because of the icon of Saint Nicholas that Father Maximus had brought from Albazin—was officially consecrated in the name of the Holy Wisdom, Hagia Sophia. Aside from this, however, there was at the time no great attention paid in Russia to the little colony in Peking.

In 1712, Father Maximus Leontiev reposed in the Lord, twenty-seven years after his arrival in Peking. The Albazinians petitioned the Emperor K'ang-hsi that a new priest be allowed to come from Russia, which petition he granted; the metropolitan of Tobolsk, Saint John Maximovitch, was ordered by Tsar Peter I to find a priest to supply their need. On January 11, 1716, Archimandrite Hilarion Lezhaisky, accompanied by a priest, a deacon, and seven minor clerics, bringing with them icons, sacred vessels, and service books,<sup>5</sup> arrived in the Imperial city, constituting the first Russian mission to Peking.

<sup>5</sup> Widmer, pp. 39-40.

thank thee, \* O Lady, for the constancy \* of thy love shown to a sinner?

## ODE EIGHT

*Let us ever extol*

In the great Expectation of the nations \* did ye trust with a trust that death itself withstood not; \* and now as sons of Jacob and of Abraham, \* with the hosts of martyrs, \* angels, and apostles, \* ye shine with joy and glory.

Clement, Anna, and ye whose names God knoweth, \* ye confessors of Christ that graced the land of China, \* remember us that faithfully remember you, \* and entreat the Saviour \* for our sins' forgiveness \* and mercy when He cometh.

Like a bride fair arrayed in nuptial glory \* doth the Church now rejoice in you, her comely Martyrs; \* for having pledged your troth in wounds of martyrdom, \* ye received the earnest \* of the everlasting \* espousal of the Bridegroom.

*Theotokion*

Since the hosts of the Heavens ever praise thee, \* nay, since God, even God, hath loved and glorified thee, \* what could it be to have the praises of a wretch? \* Yet, in thy compassion, \* pass not o'er in silence \* the praise of me, a sinner.

*Heirmos*

Let us ever extol and praise the Lord God \* Who was seen of old on the holy mount in glory, \* Who by the fiery bush revealed the great mystery \* of the Ever-virgin and undefiled Maiden \* unto the Prophet Moses.

## ODE NINE

*The heavens were astonished*

The tyrants for a season held sway on earth, \* but as men, they have perished; behold, their place cannot be found; \* as for you, ye reign in eternal light. \* And time cannot remove your crowns \* nor shall others come forth to take your place; \* the glory of the Martyrs

came upon them, they desired not the day or rest of man, but were faithful to Thee even unto death.

Synaxarion

On the tenth of this month we commemorate the holy Martyr Metrophanes Tsi-Chung, priest of the Orthodox Mission in Peking; his wife Tatiana and their sons Esaias and John; Maria, the betrothed of Esaias; Paul Wan, Mission catechist; Ia Wen, teacher at the Mission School; Matthew Hai Tsuan and his brother Vitus; Clement Kui Kin; Anna Chui; and two hundred and eleven other holy Martyrs with them that were slain by the godless in the year 1900 during the Boxer Rebellion in China.

Verses

When baked in the mystical furnace of torments,  
Your clay was transformed into vessels of glory.

On the tenth Christ's Table was adorned with the finest of China.

ODE SEVEN

*The three Hebrew Children*

How shall I praise thee, O Maria, \* and the valour of thy will-  
ingness for suff'rings? \* Having helped others flee, \* thou fleddest  
not thy slayers, \* but boldly soughtest martyrdom \* with sublime  
and boundless courage.

Nought could be vainer than the vict'ry \* that your slayers  
gained by shattering your vessels; \* for your clay shall arise \* trans-  
figured and resplendent, \* refashioned by the Potter, Christ, \* in the  
image of His glory.

Having instructed by thy teachings, \* at the last thou taughtest  
by thy noble suff'rings; \* and with prayer on thy lips, \* thou wentest  
to thy Teacher, \* Who taught thee how to bear His Cross, \* and Who  
loved thee, O divine Paul.

*Theotokion*

Daily I fall into transgressions, \* yea, and daily doth thy kind-  
ness help me rise up; \* how can I pay my debt, \* and how begin to

*The Mission from 1716 to 1860*

Father Hilarion, however, died little more than two years after reaching Peking. When news of his death reached St. Petersburg, it was proposed that a bishop rather than an archimandrite be sent to replace him, so that the Russian political presence in Peking might be enhanced by a greater ecclesiastical presence. Therefore on March 5, 1721, Father Innocent Kulchitsky was consecrated bishop in the presence of Peter I, and arrived at Selenginsk on the Chinese border the following year. He was never granted entrance to China, however, owing to problems that had arisen between Russia and China over certain fugitive Mongols that had crossed into Russia, and—more important—because the Chinese refused to admit so high a personage as a bishop.

It was doubtless the wisdom of divine providence that kept this door shut before the path of Bishop Innocent; this was apparently not the time to send the great missionary to Peking. In the words of Archimandrite Innocent, the Russian missions at that time “well understood that it was the government's wish that its own political interests be promoted through the missionary. Guided by such considerations, frequent official orders were issued and received advising caution with reference to the preaching of Christianity, and at times strictly forbidding any evangelism among the heathen. The relations of the Mission with the Chinese government were clearly set forth in official instructions, and the work of each member of the Mission definitely stated. Under such unfavourable conditions the Word of the Lord was hindered, and the number of the baptized insignificant.”<sup>6</sup>

Bishop Innocent Kulchitsky, after three difficult years waiting at the Chinese border, during which he converted many of the pagan Buryat to Orthodoxy, attempted again in 1726 to enter China, was again turned away, and in 1727 was at last appointed bishop of

<sup>6</sup> Archimandrite Innocent, p. 679.

Irkutsk. The field for evangelism that would have been well nigh closed to him in Peking lay open before him in his Siberian diocese, where, manfully braving many trials, he distinguished himself as a great shepherd both in converting pagan Mongols to Orthodoxy, and in bringing dissolute Siberian Christians to a pious life. After his death in 1731, Saint Innocent of Irkutsk became a great miracle-worker, and in 1804 his sanctity was officially recognized by the Russian Orthodox Church.

In 1728 Russia and China signed the Treaty of Kiakhta, granting the Mission legal status and defining the conditions of its existence. The second mission to Peking began in 1729. Between 1729 and 1794, there were six different missions; the sum of all their efforts seems little more than that they kept the Mission from disappearing completely. The climate in Peking, with its hot summers and oppressive dust, the isolation, the restriction of movement in the city, the lack of more substantial support and interest in St. Petersburg, the slow communications between Russia and Peking, financial need, the utterly foreign culture and language around them, and the scorn that many of the pagan Chinese showed them, all placed a heavy burden on those sent, often against their will, to serve in the Manchu capital. Yet the Chinese government, because it considered the Mission's existence to be in its own political interests, was willing to do what it felt it could to maintain the Mission. In 1730 an earthquake destroyed the original Nikolsky-Hagia Sophia church; at that time only the Albazinians used it, since in 1728 a new church had been built a few miles south, to accommodate the growing number of Russians that accompanied the missions. The Albazinian parishioners rebuilt it on their own initiative, and the Emperor Yung-cheng, who had succeeded his father K'ang-hsi to the throne in 1722, himself contributed monetary help. This same church was later renamed *Uspeniya Bogoroditsi*—Dormition of the Theotokos—but in popular usage it continued to be called the Nikolsky church, and the wonderworking icon of Saint Nicholas still hung behind the holy table in the altar.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Dudgeon, p. 40; Widmer, p. 94.

Christ the Saviour \* as being twofold in nature, both God and man.  
\* And for thy voluntary wounds, \* Christ hath made thee to share His Divinity.

As brethren according to your flesh and blood, \* in martyric blood ye also are brethren, \* who showed no mercy unto your own bodies \* that ye might win for your souls everlasting life; \* and now ye dwell in unity, \* blessed Matthew and Vitus, with all the Saints.

#### *Theotokion*

A vesture of shame and sorrow and disgrace \* hath been draped upon me by the deceiver, \* who through my folly and base love of pleasure \* hath stripped me naked of glory and innocence. \* O thou in whom God put on flesh, \* wash me clean now and clothe me in purity.

#### *Heirmos*

Entreaty do I pour forth unto the Lord, \* and to Him do I proclaim all my sorrows, \* for many woes fill my heart to repletion, \* and lo, my life unto Hades hath now drawn nigh; \* like Jonas do I pray to Thee: \* Raise me up from corruption, O Lord my God.

#### KONTAKION

##### *Fourth Tone. On this day Thou hast appeared*

The divine Metrophanes \* the martyred shepherd, \* with his great and faithful flock, \* have hallowed China with their blood; \* wherefore we praise them with sacred hymns, \* for they were faithful to Christ even unto death.

#### OIKOS

In times gone by, O my Maker, many were the merchants that came from Cathay bearing spices and silks and silver vessels; but Thou, Who art not a merchant, but the Pearl of great price, Whom also godly Zacharias calleth Orient, hast now brought thence no such thing, nor aught that moth and rust doth corrupt, but living Martyrs and confessors of Thy name. Now are they truly celestial citizens, and the Angels are their friends, for when the time of trial



*Theotokion*

Thou hast turned sorrow into joy; \* thou hast slain despair and re-opened Paradise; \* thou hast changed our curse to blessedness; \* thou hast given birth unto the Saviour, Christ.

ODE FIVE

*Wherefore hast Thou deprived me*

In imperial garments \* are ye all arrayed, and ye dwell in that city now: \* not the one forbidden, \* but the lofty Jerusalem that is free; \* wherefore as ye bow down \* before the Sovereign of the ages, \* importune His compassion in our behalf.

O what excellent beauty! \* The grace that is given you from the Creator now! \* O what artless fairness! \* O the comeliness giving no satiety! \* Lo, the very Angels \* all gaze upon you with great longing, \* and they praise Him that thus crowned your love for Him.

Trading little for great things, \* ye bartered your blood for the Kingdom that hath no end. \* Wherefore, in like manner, \* these our little laudations do ye receive, \* granting what is greater, \* your great and mighty intercessions, \* that we too might inherit that which ye have.

*Theotokion*

Never maiden was fairer, \* and never a soul so supernally innocent; \* never was the creature \* so well-pleasing to Him that created it; \* never did a virgin \* become a mother, save our Lady, \* while abiding in perfect virginity.

ODE SIX

*Entreaty*

The monster of sinful habit holdeth me \* in his foul and lightless belly, O Martyrs; \* but with the blows of your prayers do ye smite him, \* that he may spew me forth up to a better life, \* that through repentance I may find \* the inheritance promised to godliness.

O Ia, thou didst endure a double death; \* once and twice wast thou tormented and tortured, \* but thou with joy didst confess

The missions of the first half of the nineteenth century had little more success in converting the native Chinese, but they laid the foundation for this by beginning to study Chinese language and culture more diligently than their predecessors had done. By the end of the nineteenth century the Holy Scriptures and Orthodox Church books had been translated into Chinese; the Russian clergy of the Mission spoke the language fluently and were not separated from their flock by a linguistic barrier. Archimandrite Innocent summarizes this period from 1716 to 1860 by saying,

On the whole the hard-working people of the first period did much in the way of bringing China and Europe into closer relations with each other and into better mutual understanding. They introduced into Europe a knowledge of the Chinese language and literature, Chinese customs and manners of living, Chinese flora and fauna, Chinese ethnography and medicine. There were 155 Russian missionaries all told during this first period. Each tried to contribute something to the treasury of knowledge on China. Their works consisted mostly of translations . . . If this first period of the Russian Orthodox Mission, extending over 150 years, were to be judged solely by its success in propagating Christianity, the judgement would not be favourable. In 1860 Peking was the only important missionary centre, and here the Mission numbered less than two hundred Christians, including the descendants of the Albasin prisoners.<sup>8</sup>

*The Mission after 1860*

With the signing of the Treaty of Tientsin in 1858, and that of Peking in 1860, a warred-against and weakened China, under Western compulsion, at last granted foreign nations diplomatic residence in Peking, opened up many new ports for trade, and was bound to protect foreign missionaries preaching in the interior of China. This inaugurated a new era for the Russian Mission, and the preaching of the Gospel to the Chinese people in Peking began in earnest.

<sup>8</sup> Archimandrite Innocent, p. 680.

Archimandrite Gury Karpov was the head of a mission from 1858 to 1864. Archimandrite Innocent says of him,

During his stay in Peking, the diplomatic and religious activities of the Mission were separated. He translated and printed the New Testament in Chinese and this translation later became the foundation of the code of the holy orthodox books. Because of his long study of the Chinese language, Father Gury possessed a wide knowledge of Chinese Literature. He looked through and corrected all the orthodox books, written by his predecessors, many of which had been published in Peking, having been printed from wooden blocks. He stayed at Peking, spoke Chinese well and did a great deal of preaching and lecturing in church and in school. His lectures were exegetical in nature, being based on various texts in the Bible. During his time the preaching of the Gospel extended beyond Peking. In Dung-ding-ang, where thirty heathen were baptized, a church was built by money contributed by Russians. The chief helper of Father Gury was a priest, Isaiah Polikin by name.<sup>9</sup> He was the first to use the Chinese spoken language in the translations of the Holy Books. He organized a Boarding School where various handicrafts were taught. On his return to Russia, Father Gury preached for eighteen years among sects in the South, and died as Archbishop of Simferopol in 1882.<sup>10</sup>

In 1871 the Englishman John Dudgeon described the Russian Mission thus:

<sup>9</sup> Dudgeon says of this church and of Father Isaiah, "About 100 li [approx. 30 miles—Ed.] at a place called Tung-ting-an . . . 7 li South from Matou on the Peiho [River], the Russians have a number of Christians. This is the only station out of Peking. This community was founded by Father Isaiah in 1863. Formerly in this village there was only one Christian family. Afterwards a large portion of the village expressed the wish to adopt Christianity. A church was built out of funds furnished by the merchants in Kiachta. This little church at present numbers 75 Christians." (Dudgeon, p. 41) Dudgeon called Father Isaiah himself "one of the most active and amiable of men." (p. 40). Archimandrite Innocent (p. 683) notes that the church buildings in Tung-ting-an were destroyed by the Boxers in 1900. He does not specify whether any of its members were martyred.

<sup>10</sup> Archmandrite Innocent, p. 681.

Glory; both now. *Theotokion*

O rejoice, Maid, thou fiery throne of the Lord \* and the royal chair made for the King of all; \* and couch spread with purple cloth, \* golden chamber of porphyry, \* robe of genuine purple and lightning-like chariot, \* temple honoured and precious, and lampstand of many lights. \* Rejoice, O Theotokos, mighty city of twelve walls, \* fair gateway wrought all of gold, \* bridal chamber of stately form, \* comely table of fairest gold \* and dwelling-place divinely adorned, \* O rejoice, thou sun-drenched and resplendent Bride, \* rejoice, O Virgin, for thou art \* my soul's only comeliness.

*Or, Theotokion of the Cross*

On beholding the Shepherd and Lamb of God \* hanging nailed to the Cross, the all-pure one wept; \* her inwards were rent with grief \* and she wailed out maternally: \* Woe is me! O Thou Light of the world, O my God and Lord, \* for whose sake dost Thou willingly now undergo these things? \* wishing thus by all means to save all of the earthborn, \* that Thy ruined image might \* change abode and remove unto \* the divine life that is on high. \* I magnify Thy suff'rings, O Lord, \* which Thou bearest for Thy great compassion's sake; \* for by Thine own pains Thou healest \* all of mankind's pains and griefs.

#### ODE FOUR

*I have hearkened and heard*

Like the sun rising with the day \* have the brilliant Martyrs arisen in the East, \* and although their flesh hath set on earth, \* with their souls they dwell in everlasting light.

Righteous Father Metrophanes, \* as a faithful shepherd of the Good Shepherd, Christ, \* thou didst lay thy life down for thy sheep, \* leading them to pastures that are ever green.

Let all China, if she be wise, \* leap and be exultant with great exceeding joy, \* for no longer is she barren now, \* for her womb hath borne much fruit unto the Lord.

the God of peace \* didst give thyself up to slaughter \* as a wholly blameless, acceptable sacrifice.

Thou, O noble Tatiana, wast taken out of the gates, \* there to meet thy Jesus, Who also suffered without the gate; \* and for the Head of all, \* thou wast then gladly beheaded; \* with the Blood of Jesus hast thou now been sanctified.

Thou, O valiant Esaias, wast a good soldier of Christ. \* Thou, O John, wast led like a lamb to slaughter courageously; \* though but a child in years, \* above thine elders in wisdom, \* thou didst suffer torments for Christ with great fortitude.

#### *Theotokion*

Mighty waters of weeping do thou now grant unto me, \* where-with I may wash clean my soul, made vile with the filth of sin. \* For thou hast given birth \* unto the Ocean of mercy, \* Who appeared to men as a man from thy spotless womb.

#### *Heirmos*

Of the vault of the heavens art Thou, O Lord, Fashioner; \* so, too, of the Church art Thou founder; do Thou establish me \* in unfeigned love for Thee, \* Who art the height of things sought for, \* and staff of the faithful, O Thou only Friend of man.

#### SESSIONAL HYMN

##### *Plagal of Fourth Tone. By conceiving the Wisdom*

Though once wholly benighted in pagan gloom, \* China now hath beheld the bright truth of Christ, \* which shone in Metrophanes \* and the Martyrs that shared his death; \* for the lovers of darkness, who slew them to quench their light, \* with their torments enkindled a brighter and greater flame, \* which burnt up delusion and enlightened the whole world. \* And now at the throne of light \* in the presence of Christ the King \* they all give ear to us that cry: \* Intercede with Christ our God \* that forgiveness of all their transgressions be \* vouchsafed to them that with longing \* keep your holy memory.

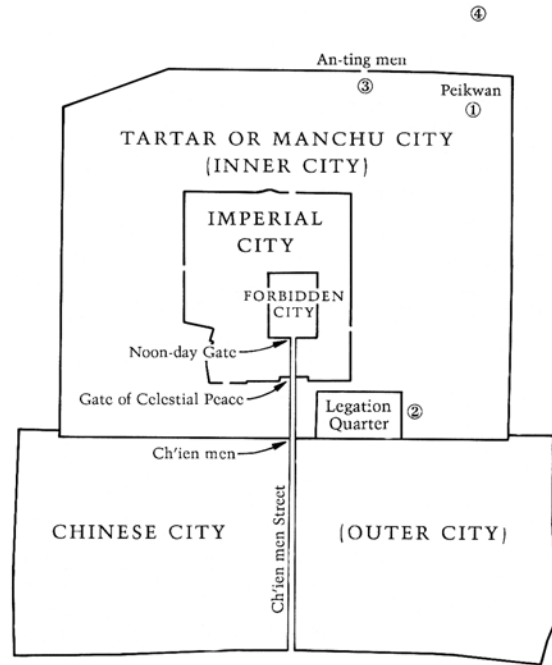
Divine service is held in the Nankwan<sup>11</sup> on Sundays, in the Peikwan on Saturday afternoons at 5 P.M. and on Sunday mornings and afternoons. The fasts and other high holy days are also religiously observed. . . .

There are two Chinese schools at the Peikwan, one for boys, and the other for girls. The boys about 40 in number are taught the elements of Chinese knowledge, reading and writing as in native schools, and are instructed also in the Christian religion. Heathen boys are not admitted. The girls about 30 in number learn the same and in addition, are taught useful handiwork, such as sewing, knitting, embroidery &c. . . . The pupils of both schools are from 8 to 16 years of age. . . . Through the means of these schools, all the male Albazines and most of the women can read and write. . . . The girls of the Russian school receive legally no dowry, but the mission generally grants them a portion. The priests from their own means help the more deserving, a good deal. . . .

The design of the Ecclesiastical mission, according to the directions of the Synod, is the maintenance of Christianity

<sup>11</sup> The "Nankwan," or "South Hostel," was a second compound, including a church, accorded the Russians in 1728, where the Russian missions usually abode from then on, and which became in the nineteenth century the base of the political missions; the "Peikwan," or "North Hostel," included the original Nikolsky church, where the descendents of the Albazians continued to live, and which became in the nineteenth century the base of the ecclesiastical missions. Widmer says of the Peikwan, "In the late nineteenth century it was greatly elaborated, with additional buildings, a new cathedral, a library, mills, beehives, and a printing press. As an institution it survived the Boxer Rebellion, the fall of the Ch'ing dynasty, and the end of the Romanovs. Still going strong in the years of the Chinese Republic, its splendid Easter service was something that a foreign resident of Peking would not want to miss. Although it had served as a refugee center for Russian emigres after the October Revolution in 1917, the pei kwan itself had no refuge from the revolutionary events of 1949. Soon afterwards it was leveled and became merely the site upon which a new Soviet embassy was constructed. . . . According to Nagel's guide of the city, a new Orthodox chapel has been built nearby the old grounds, almost three hundred years after Maksim Leontev's arrival. It would be worth the trouble to inquire whether the icon of St. Nicholas is inside." (Widmer, p. 96)

## PEKING



① The Peikwan or “North Hostel,” site of the original Russian settlement dating back to 1685. The Nikolsky Church, the captive Albazinians and their descendants, and the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission, were all located here.

② The Legation Quarter, housing the foreign embassies, besieged by the Boxers from June 20 to August 15, 1900. The Nankwan or “South Hostel,” site of the Russian diplomatic missions, was located here, and was the oldest of the foreign legations in Peking.

③ The An-ting men (or Andinmin) city gates. Fr. Mitrophan’s wife Tatiana was led outside these gates to a Boxer camp and beheaded (see page 46).

④ Approximate site of the Russian cemetery of Saint Seraphim of Sarov. Desecrated in 1900 by the Boxers.

## MATINS

*After the usual Reading from the Psalter, we say the Canons of the Octoechos and the following of the Saints. Before the Troparia, we say, O Martyrs of Christ, intercede in our behalf.*

*Plagal of Fourth Tone*

ODE ONE

*The charioteer of Pharaoh*

Constrained by love and ardent longing, we the faithful chant our praises to you, \* the glory of China, \* who illumined all the world with bright martyric beams of light; \* grant our mind your enlightenment, and our tongue, grace to chant to you \* as befitteth Martyrs belov’d of God.

Now are ye truly sons of Heaven, who were proved through persecutions and pains; \* for some were dismembered, \* others, burnt alive, beheaded, or tormented unto death. \* But with all of the Martyrs that have contested from ages past, \* ye rejoice as children of God Most High.

Ye loved the wisdom of the Lord, and built thereon the steadfast house of your souls; \* the fierce rains descended \* and the winds of torments beat upon it, yet it never fell, \* being built not on sand, but upon the Rock of the Saviour Christ, \* Whom ye glorified in your martyrdom.

*Theotokion*

The mind of man cannot conceive how thou, O Lady, hast conceived without man, \* remaining a virgin, \* giving birth to Him born motherless of God before all time; \* but when thou wast delivered of the small Babe that is God and man, \* we were all delivered from Adam’s curse.

ODE THREE

*Of the vault of the heavens*

As a lover of meekness and faithful priest of the Lord, \* thou didst seek for peace with all men, O blessed Metrophanes, \* and for

Glory. *Plagal of Fourth Tone*

Ye are the glory of the martyrs and the joy of the angels; ye are the boast of the Orthodox and the purification of China; ye are the comfort of the faithful and the downfall of demons; ye are servants no longer, but Christ calleth you brethren, who have laid hold on adoption through the violence ye suffered. Ye are bold intercessors for us sinners, who cry to you: Intercede with the Lord, that He have mercy on our souls.

Both now. *Theotokion.*  
*O most awesome wonder*

Being in darkness, I cry to thee: \* O Lady, lighten my ways, \* for I know that the lamp of love \* and compassion lit in thee \* never dimmeth, despite my sins. \* For in the flesh that He took from thy pure womb, \* the Unapproachable Light shone on the world; \* and He bestowed on thee \* all the brightness of His mercy and His love for man, \* which thou freely grantest unto them that turn to thee.

*Or, Theotokion of the Cross*

As Thy Mother saw Thee on the Cross, \* she cried in bitter lament: \* When Thou madest the stars, O Child, \* all Thine Angels praised Thy name \* with a loud voice that shook the heights. \* But now beholding their Master crucified, \* they are struck dumb with great terror and dismay. \* O Sun of Righteousness, \* when wilt Thou rise up again with Thy sweet light, \* driving all the gloom of sorrow from Thy Mother's heart?

DISMISSAL HYMN  
*Third Tone. Awed by the beauty*

Let us the flock of Christ with love and piety \* now glorify with hymns and truly joyous odes \* the faithful Martyrs of the truth who suffered for Christ in China. \* For having confessed the Faith, \* they all bravely went unto death \* as lambs which were sacrificed \* for our Shepherd and Master Christ. \* And therefore to the Martyrs we cry out: \* Remember us all, who sing your praises.

among the already existing Christians (Albazines and Russians who live in Peking) and the propagation of the same among the heathen Chinese, but with great caution; only those Chinese are to be received as converts, concerning whom the priests are convinced that they understand the nature of the Christian religion. The quality of the converts is more important than the number. There are from 10 to 40 Chinese, converted yearly in Peking to the Greek church. The number of the Russo-Chinese Christians in and around Peking is generally speaking about 500. The descendants of the Albazines, who all live in the neighbourhood of the Peikwan . . . amount at present to 120 (23 families). . . . They are at liberty to marry, when they will, either Chinese or Mantchu. Their wives permit themselves to be baptized.<sup>12</sup>

Archimandrite Pallady Kaffarov had been the head of a mission before Archimandrite Gury, from 1849 to 1859, and was the head of a second after him, from 1864 to 1878. Archimandrite Innocent calls him

a tireless student of the Chinese language, which he knew better than all his predecessors. Many of his literary works were later translated into European languages. Among the Holy Books translated by Father Pallady into Chinese were the Book of Psalms and the Book of Services. . . . During his life time, one new station for the preaching of the Gospel was opened at Urga in Mongolia. . . . The successor and assistant of Father Pallady was Father Flavian (1878–1884). He collected and edited in Chinese everything that had been written by his predecessors, about forty books in all. He successfully conducted church services in Chinese, which previously had been conducted in Slavonic, and also organized a choir. The assistants of Father Flavian were two priests, Nicolas Adoratsky and Alex Vinogradoff. About this time a Chinese priest, Father Mitrofan

<sup>12</sup> Dudgeon, pp. 40–41.

Tsi was ordained in Japan. Father Flavian died in 1915, after he had been made the Metropolitan of Kieff.<sup>13</sup>

The Chinese priest, Father Mitrophan, was ordained in Japan by Bishop Nikolai Kasatkin in 1880. To appreciate what an act of courage and faith his acceptance of the priesthood was, it is necessary to understand how potent Chinese anti-foreign and anti-Christian sentiments had become.

### *China and the West in the Nineteenth Century*

The Ch'ing dynasty had seen its greatest glory under the Emperors K'ang-hsi (reigned 1661-1722), his son Yung-cheng (1722-1735), and grandson Ch'ien-lung (1736-96). This was one of the most magnificent periods in all Chinese history; its imperial government boasted a generally efficient administration, great wealth, and military prowess; the arts flourished and there was widespread peace and prosperity.

Roman Catholicism attained great influence in China during the reign of K'ang-hsi. Indeed, his refusal to allow Saint Innocent to enter China as a bishop is said to be partly attributable to Jesuit intrigues in Peking. The celebrated Rites Controversy, however, ended with the Papacy's negative reply to the question whether Chinese converts would be permitted to perform the traditional rites of ancestor worship. After this, the official position towards Catholicism—which for the Chinese generally meant Christianity—grew less tolerant. In 1724 the Emperor Yung-cheng issued his Sacred Edict, which convicted Catholicism (and, to a lesser degree, Buddhism and Taoism) as heterodox, and extolled Confucianism as alone orthodox and the way to a virtuous life. It will be remembered that four years later the Treaty of Kiakhra was concluded (see p. 6 above), and the Russian Mission in Peking was formally recognized, but its possibilities for missionary work restricted.

By the end of the eighteenth century, major internal rebellions began disrupting various provinces. From 1796 to 1805, the White

<sup>13</sup> Archimandrite Innocent, pp. 681-82.

the marvellous blood of thy Martyrs. Rejoice, all ye Martyrs of China, for in you is fulfilled the word that saith, Because of His servants shall the Lord be comforted. Since ye spurned the idols of the nations, ye now bless the Lord with all the house of Israel. Intercede ye with Him in our behalf.

Both now. *Theotokion*

Rejoice, O Lady Theotokos, for through thy wondrous conceiving, thou hast destroyed the great wall of enmity that stood between God and man.

*For the Aposticha, the following Stichera:*

First Tone. *O all-lauded Martyrs*

O China, in thee hath been fulfilled \* the divine prayer of the Great King Who took on Him the sins of all the people and besought \* for a goodly harvest \* that would gladden all the earth, \* for now, behold, a harvest of Martyrs hath been reaped from thine own seed; \* and they pray to Him that prayed for them \* to grant mercy \* unto thee and all the world.

*Verse:* Wondrous is God in His saints.

As strangers to them estranged from God, \* ye lived all your lives as strangers in a strange land for love of Him that suffered for your sakes. \* Ye were mocked and hated \* and estranged from life itself; \* but now with them that come from the east and west ye sit with Abraham \* in the Kingdom, not as strangers now, \* but as children \* of the Light that ye adored.

*Verse:* In the saints that are in His earth hath the Lord been wondrous.

O little, O humble Galilee, \* dost thou see how far the nets cast by thy sons, the poor fishermen, have gone forth and prevailed? \* Spanning times and ages, \* they reach all the ends of earth; \* and now we all rejoice in a great and holy catch from China's sea; \* and the Martyrs intercede with Christ \* to grant mercy \* unto all that sing their praise.

*First Tone*

O Lord, fulfilled is the psalm that saith, All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. For Thou hast taken to Thyself on this day new confessors from the land of China; and unto them we cry: Rejoice, O Metrophanes, thou good and faithful servant, who hast toiled strenuously in the vineyard of thy Lord, and hast watered it with thine own blood. Rejoice, O Tatiana, for when thou wast beheaded, the Lord put into thy mouth a new song, a hymn unto thy God. Rejoice, O soldier Esaias; thou didst receive one stroke of the sword, wherewith thou didst fell all the ranks of the enemy. Rejoice, O John, for the ancient foe hath been mocked by thy tender years. Intercede ye with God in our behalf.

*Same Tone*

O Lord, fulfilled is the psalm that saith, The heathen shall be troubled, and the dwellers at the farthest regions shall be afraid at Thy signs. For Thou hast made the outgoings of Thy Martyrs to delight, and unto them we cry: Rejoice, O Maria; with the virgins thou hast followed after the Theotokos, and hast been brought unto the King. Rejoice, O Paul, for nothing was able to separate thee from the love of Christ. Rejoice, O Ia, who with thine upright confession hast slain the twisted dragon. Intercede ye with God in our behalf.

*Same Tone*

O Lord, fulfilled is Thy word that saith, Other sheep have I, which are not of this fold. They have heard Thy voice, and unto them we cry: Rejoice, O Clement, who in embracing the foolishness of God, didst prove thyself wiser than the sages revered by thine ancestors. Rejoice, O Anna, who hadst no fear of them that kill the body. Rejoice, O Matthew and Vitus: for from the womb ye came forth brethren in the flesh, and from the sword ye came forth brethren of Jesus. Intercede ye with Him in our behalf.

*Glory. Same Tone*

Rejoice, O China, for though thou wast grown old in the wickedness of idols, thy youth hath been renewed as the eagle's, in

Lotus sects in northern China, secret societies characterized by millenarianism, Buddhist occultism, and opposition to the established government, broke out in rebellion; in 1813 a new incarnation of the White Lotus sects emerged in the Eight Trigrams Rebellion, part of which saw some eighty rebels enter the Forbidden City itself, the imperial sanctum sanctorum in Peking; the Taipings, whose leader had read Christian writings and considered himself “the second son of Jehovah and younger brother of Jesus,”<sup>14</sup> waged a civil war in southern China that lasted from 1853 to 1864, setting up their own “kings,” and threatening to topple the Ch’ing dynasty; and two significant Moslem rebellions that spanned the 1860’s and 1870’s, and sundry other local uprisings, greatly weakened the internal strength and order of China.

The expansionist Western powers and Japan took advantage of this disorder. Using “gunboat diplomacy,” they divided China into “spheres of influence” and pressed the Chinese government to allow them more opportunities for trade at a greater advantage, which resulted in military encounters throughout the nineteenth century; two of the more important, both of which were lost to the British, were the notorious Opium War of 1841–42 and the “Arrow” War of 1856–60. The latter led to the Treaty of Tientsin of 1858, and that of Peking of 1860, which, as mentioned above, formally opened China to the foreign powers, both for trade and for missionary activities. Yet while the Chinese government now had an obligation towards missionaries entering the interior, the Sacred Edict of 1724 was not officially renounced; the Ch’ing dynasty would henceforth be in the ambiguous position of officially upholding orthodox Confucianism, while being coerced from without to protect preachers of a different faith.

The increasing humiliations that China was suffering at the hands of the “foreign devils” would in themselves have been enough to provoke hatred against the foreigner and all that was his, religion not excepted. But to this was added the inundation of European

<sup>14</sup> *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of China*, p. 237.

missionaries after 1860. Despite the sincerity of a number of them, many, especially Roman Catholics from France and Germany, acting with or without the support of their governments, conducted themselves with such arrogance that they estranged the Chinese from any desire to espouse the faith being preached. Whereas England had an official and well-established sphere of influence in China, France and Germany worked to establish their own through their missionaries, whom they deliberately used to further their political interests and who often had undisguised contempt and even abhorrence for those whose salvation they had professedly come to seek. Russia, to avoid antagonizing the Manchu emperors, had at times even forbidden her missionaries in Peking to evangelize the Chinese. The French and German missionaries, however, aggressively sought as many converts as possible, then making the need to protect them the justification for greater political and military presence in China.

For centuries and even millennia, the Chinese, priding themselves on their superior civilization, had considered the Westerners barbarians. Yet now these barbarians were taking their ports and entering their country, preaching a strange religion and deriding as inferior their culture and indeed all that was sacred to them. French and German missionaries, ignoring Chinese sensibilities regarding protocol and rank, appropriated to themselves forms of dress and comportment traditionally limited to the official classes; and when local anti-foreign riots destroyed their properties, the missionaries, supported by their country's gunboats, often demanded exorbitant sums of money in restitution, or prominent sites—such as former imperial palaces or Buddhist temples—on which they built cathedrals that became conspicuous symbols of foreign domination.

But perhaps what most provoked the Chinese of all levels, especially the Confucian-educated gentry and officialdom, was the interference of the missionaries in legal affairs. Enjoying extraterritorial status, the missionary felt himself above Chinese law, and often intervened in native courts in behalf of his converts, even in matters having nothing to do with religion. This increased both the prestige

palace now, \* not one wrought by hand of man, tricked out with paint and gold, \* but with eternal foundation-stones \* laid by the Most High; \* wherein His righteousness dwelleth and His truth, \* where the assembly of the first-born Saints \* praise His name with the awesome thrice-holy hymn, \* clad in garments of pure white, \* which were washed in the blood of the Lamb.

Since ye would not offer incense unto idols, \* ye yourselves were offered as sweet incense to the Lord \* and an acceptable sacrifice \* and spotless victims; \* and since ye hearkened not to your slayers' threats, \* ye have been deemed worthy of the Angels' songs on high, \* their holy dinning and joyous roar \* and thund'rous praises; \* and as ye join their resounding hymnody, \* make intercession in behalf of us \* who with frail tongues of clay praise your martyrdom \* and your forcible entry \* into Heaven through your hallowed blood.

#### *Glory. Third Tone*

Shout with jubilation unto the Lord, all the earth; sing unto Him that in every nation hath revealed His righteousness. Rejoice, O land of China; for thou hast seen His salvation. Thine earth hath been watered with the blood of Martyrs; thy gloom hath been dispersed by the truth of Christ. Thy children now stand in the courts of the Lord, and they intercede with the Almighty God to have mercy on the world that He hath fashioned.

#### *Both now. Theotokion*

How can we not marvel at thy theandric Offspring, O all-revered one? For without experience of wedlock, thou, O all-blameless one, hast brought forth in the flesh a fatherless Son, Who was born motherless of the Father before the ages, and Who in no way suffered change or intermingling or division, but preserved in their entirety the properties of each essence. Wherefore, O Lady, Virgin Mother, do thou entreat Him that the souls of them that, in Orthodox manner, profess thee to be God's Birthgiver may be saved.

*If an Entreaty be desired, chant the following:*





## Service to the Holy Martyrs of China

*Whose memory is celebrated June 10*

Composed by the Holy Transfiguration Monastery

### VESPERS

*For 'Lord, I have cried,' we allow for four verses and chant the following Stichera:*

*Fourth Tone. Thou who wast called from on high*

Rejoice, O Father Metrophanes, with great joy, \* who didst shepherd well the flock of Christ in times of peace, \* and fleddest not when the wolves appeared, \* as doth the hireling; \* but as a good shepherd standing by his flock, \* thou didst gather many of thy sheep around thyself, \* and when the savage wolves slaughtered thee, \* thou thereby leddest \* the sheep that faithfully followed after thee \* unto the pasturelands of Paradise, \* there where one is the flock, one the Shepherd, Christ, \* He to Whose voice ye hearkened; \* Who hath given you eternal life.

The ancient dragon fell writhing to perdition \* when ye pierced him through with the sharp saber of the truth; \* he that made darkness his dwelling-place \* fled from your brilliance. \* For in a land that he thought was his alone, \* how he raged to see the Cross and truth of Christ revered! \* And in his frenzy, he roared at you \* to bow to idols; \* but then he learned your great faith and love for God, \* and when he slew you, he himself was slain \* by your valiant confession and martyrdom \* and your greatness of spirit \* and forgiveness of your murderers.

When ye were slaughtered and shed your blood on China, \* then did a new dynasty arise majestically, \* not one that falleth with time and change, \* but that endureth; \* for ye abide in a mighty

of the missionary and the gentry's animosity towards him; it encouraged the superficial conversion to Roman Catholicism of many that sought to evade the law or to use the missionaries' power to gain an advantage over their neighbors, and it gave that religion the reputation of a haven for the dregs of society, a reputation not allayed by their practice of giving stipends to converts.<sup>15</sup>

Finally, although the leaders of the Taiping Rebellion had themselves invented the religion they espoused, the mere fact that it was associated with Christian teachings made Christianity seem more dangerous and perverse.

The reaction to the Western religion at its most arrogant was a Chinese campaign of defamation and destruction at its most virulent. Anti-Christian pamphlets, filled with the most monstrous inventions and blasphemies, were printed and circulated in great numbers.<sup>16</sup> Posters and placards were set up in public, listing the offenses, real or invented, of the missionaries, calling for their destruction, and specifying how, when, and where; and the attacks were often carried out. Provincial Chinese officials found themselves caught between orders from Peking to protect the missionaries in compliance with the treaties, and the threat of lynching by the local populace if they showed sympathy to the hated foreigners. When the French and Germans demanded, and sometimes obtained, the Chinese government's punishment or replacement of local officials who had insufficiently protected Catholic converts (or who they simply felt were too unsympathetic to them), this further interfer-

<sup>15</sup> For concrete instances of the missionaries' high-handed conduct, see Cohen for the French, and Esherick for the Germans in Shantung province; it will be seen that the criticisms made here are mild. To elaborate on the missionaries' abuses would go beyond the scope of this article, but not to mention them at all might seem to place all the blame of the Boxer tragedy on the Chinese, and none on those who did so much to provoke it.

<sup>16</sup> It was alleged, for example, that when Chinese converts were at the point of death, Roman Catholic priests removed their eyes, which they transformed into silver through alchemy, the eyes of barbarians being unsuited for the process (Cohen, p. 31); this is one of the few such allegations that are printable. Convents and orphanages, and what went on behind their closed doors, were also common targets of extravagant slanders.

ence aggravated the humiliation and anger of the Chinese. In such circumstances, even small misunderstandings were easily magnified on both sides, and led to tragedies.

The decade of hostility that began in 1860 ended in the Tientsin Massacre of June 21, 1870. In Tientsin, a port city southeast of Peking, a French consul, in a fit of rage over recent provocations, shot and killed a Chinese magistrate's attendant, having shot at and missed the magistrate himself. The French consul and his chancellor were immediately slain by the crowd that had gathered; "the final toll in lives stood at 'between thirty and forty' Chinese converts and twenty-one foreigners, including two French officials, ten nuns, and two priests,"<sup>17</sup> who had been slain in the most horrible ways imaginable.

### *The Russian Mission and China until 1900*

Such was the political and spiritual climate in China in the second half of the nineteenth century, in which Father Mitrophan consented to become a priest in 1880, although he knew that because of it "his end would not be pleasant."<sup>18</sup> The Tientsin Massacre had occurred only ten years earlier. Father Isaiah Polikin of the Russian Mission had gone from Peking to nearby Tientsin to perform a marriage on the day the catastrophe took place, and as it happened, the couple he had gone to marry were among the victims of the mob.<sup>19</sup> Although a Roman Catholic consul from France had provoked the massacre, any Chinese Christian, regardless of his denomination, was now seen as an enemy by many of the antagonized Chinese; and in this light, both Father Mitrophan's consent to become a priest, and his wife Tatiana's concurrence, required by the Church canons, were heroic.

With the ordination of the first native Chinese Orthodox priest, the Mission in Peking had come of age; but it was perhaps the most dangerous and difficult time to be a Christian in all of Chinese his-

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, p. 233.

<sup>18</sup> See p. 35 below.

<sup>19</sup> Dudgeon, p. 41.

But according to the eyewitness testimony of the pagans themselves, certain of the Chinese Orthodox faced their martyric death with astonishing self-sacrifice. Paul Wan, the Chinese Orthodox catechist, suffered martyrdom with prayer on his lips. Ia Wen, the teacher of the mission school, was tormented twice. The first time the Boxers cruelly maimed her and cast her to the ground half dead. But when she regained consciousness the pagan guard heard her groaning and brought her into his shelter. After a little she was again subjected to fresh torments, which at last caused her death. Yet on both occasions she joyously confessed the name of Christ before her tormentors. After the terrible events of this first night of the persecution, some peace-loving Chinese citizens found an eight-year-old child, John Tsi, (the son of a priest who himself had been murdered), who had been mercilessly mutilated by the Boxers. To their question if he were suffering much, the child with a smile on his lips replied "It is not hard to suffer for Christ!"

The blood of martyrs has always been the seed from which flourishing Christian communities have sprung up in pagan lands. Let us then pray that this terrible persecution, far from bringing discouragement to the Orthodox missionaries and the little Orthodox flock in China, may on the contrary become therein a source of greater zeal and the wider extension of the Kingdom of God, to the glory of Him that said, "This Gospel shall be preached in the whole world" (Matt. 26:13). And again, "Many shall come from the east and west and shall recline with Abraham and Isaac in the Kingdom of the Heavens!"





## A Notice on the Orthodox Martyrs of China

*From Church Truth, the Official Journal  
of the Patriarchate of Constantinople,  
March 23, 1901*

Translated from the Greek by  
the Holy Transfiguration Monastery

AS IS KNOWN, a severe persecution recently broke out in China against all Christians in general, including those of the Orthodox Mission. Eyewitnesses in China of the persecution have given us some details of the atrocities, which are reminiscent of those perpetrated in the times of Nero and Diocletian.

From a recent letter to “Moscow News,” Archimandrite Innocent, the leader of the Russian Orthodox Mission in China (for some time now the Russian Orthodox Mission has been active in China even as it has in Japan), we are informed that the recently organized Orthodox community in China has had martyrs and confessors of her own that call to mind the martyric contests of the primitive Christian Church. A feeling of genuinely sacred emotion is produced in the soul of the reader before such examples of self-sacrifice for the name of Christ in days when—alas!—very little godly zeal and religious fervor is to be seen.

June 11, 1900, was chiefly the day of their martyric death for the Orthodox in Peking, China. Some of them, at the horrifying thought of such a death and torture, renounced the Faith of Christ and sacrificed to the idols to save their lives. Others, however, disregarding torments and death, boldly confessed Christ; their end was terrible.

tory. And it may be said that all the members of the Mission were already in training for martyrdom, their good volition towards God being perpetually put to the test. They were branded “devils second class,” better only than the “foreign devils” themselves; they lived as strangers in their native land, with the knowledge that it would take but a small eruption of discontent among their countrymen for their property to be destroyed and themselves attacked and even tortured and killed.

From 1883 to 1896, under Archimandrite Amphilochius, little progress was made, owing mostly to lack of funds and inadequately trained missionaries.

In March 1897, Archimandrite Innocent Figourovsky arrived in Peking and took steps to put the Mission in order. Thanks to his diligence and ability, the Mission began to flourish as never before. The reforms that he instituted included “(a) The introduction of a monastery together with social regulations for the missionaries, (b) Daily Services (Liturgies) in Chinese, (c) The establishment of a business in order to support some of the poor Albasins with business ability, (d) The sending of preachers out from Peking to spread the Gospel, (e) The organization of Parish activities, (f) The establishment of local works of charity.”<sup>20</sup> Although the Mission had had many dedicated laborers and accomplished scholars, in Archimandrite Innocent it was receiving its most zealous and far-sighted missionary; and it was the mercy of God that he came in time to help the Mission through the harshest trial of its existence.

### *The Boxer Rebellion*

By the second half of the nineteenth century, it was apparent to many Chinese officials and scholars that China would have to accept a certain degree of modernization and reform if it was to become strong enough to resist foreign domination. It was a time that called for a brilliant and powerful leader that would have the vision to preserve traditional Chinese ways and institutions, while learning

<sup>20</sup> Archimandrite Innocent, p. 683.

enough from the Western nations to fight them with their own weapons.

This idea had already gained ground among some of the Imperial Court and with the most important provincial governors. In the early 1860's the so-called "Self-strengthening Movement" had been initiated to modernize China's diplomatic and military institutions. The efforts made were not profound enough, however, to remake the vast Chinese economy and military, as the loss to Japan in the war of 1894-95 revealed.

A new effort at reform was made in 1898. A number of scholars convinced the Emperor of the necessity to introduce more Western technology into China, and many edicts for reform were issued in the Emperor's name. But the Dowager Empress Tz'u-hsi, with the collaboration of the conservative elements at the Imperial Court, rapidly ended the reform movement with a coup that made the Emperor a prisoner in the Palace and brought Tz'u-hsi, who had been really controlling the Palace, openly into power.

Tz'u-hsi had become the concubine of the Emperor Hsien-feng (reigned 1851-61), and while the legitimate Empress remained childless, Tz'u-hsi bore him a son, whom she managed to have made Emperor on Hsien-feng's death in 1861, with herself being the power behind the throne as Dowager Empress and co-regent. Upon her son's death in 1874, she replaced him with another boy-emperor, thus retaining the actual power herself. Skilled in palace politics, she was ambitious, vain, ruthless, and a consummate manipulator. In her lust for power, she kept her government in the hands of eunuchs; lavished vast sums from the Imperial Treasury on the indulgences of her fancy; imprisoned, exiled, and slew those who opposed her policies; and, in short, was in all things the contrary of what China needed at this critical time in its history.

While the Palace in Peking was ruled by the passionately anti-reform and anti-foreign Dowager Empress, popular hostility to the foreign missionaries and their converts was becoming sharper in the neighboring province of Shantung. The loss to Japan in 1895, and the

(Mt. 10:28), met torture and death for the Saviour of the world unafraid, entreating God to enlighten their persecutors and to forgive them their sins.

All together, of the one thousand souls that comprised its flock, the Mission lost three hundred. Some of them apostatized, but others, two hundred twenty-two in number, were radiant confessors and martyrs for the Christian faith.

The outbreak of this new, Chinese "Bartholomew's Eve" elicited comment in the foreign press. *Church Truth*, the official mouthpiece of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, dedicated a special article to them, at the conclusion of which appeared the following words: "The blood of martyrs has always been the seed from which Churches of Christ have sprung up in pagan lands and through which Christian life has developed. Let us beseech God that this bloody persecution, to which the little branch of Orthodoxy in China has been subjected, has served, first of all, as a source of indefatigable faith and courage for those who earnestly carry out the preaching of the Gospel; and secondly, as a basis for further successes of the faith and the Kingdom of God in China, to the glory and honor of Him Who said: 'Let the Gospel be preached throughout the whole world.'"

*N.B.:* Soon after their martyrdom, the Chinese Orthodox slain by the Boxers were accorded the veneration due to saints who have given their lives for Holy Orthodoxy. Their veneration was approved by the Holy Synod of the Russian Church, which decreed that the commemoration of the Chinese martyrs be performed as follows: On June 10/23 (the day of their martyrdom), a liturgy for the departed is to be served, and on the evening before, a full panikhida for "all tortured and slain for the Holy Orthodox Faith"; on the following day, 11/24 June, a solemn liturgy is to be celebrated, and on the evening preceding it, an all-night vigil, the texts of which are to be taken from the General Menaion's service for several martyrs.—*Ed. note.*

elderly man expressed sympathy for the boy, saying: “Of what is the child guilty? It is his parents’ fault that he became a follower of the devils.” Others made a laughingstock of him and abused him, or simply cast jibes in his direction. Thus was he led like a lamb to the slaughter. Maria, Isaiah’s fiancée, was nineteen years old. Two days before the Boxers’ pogrom she came to Fr. Mitrophan’s house, wishing to die with the family of her betrothed. When the Boxers surrounded the house on June 10/23, she courageously helped to save others, supporting them as they climbed over the wall. When, having broken down the gate, the soldiers and Boxers entered the yard, Maria boldly accused them of murdering people illegally, without trial; they dared not kill her, but only wounded her arms and pierced her feet. In general, she exhibited extraordinary courage and understanding. Sergei, Fr. Mitrophan’s son, tried three times to persuade her to leave and hide herself, but she replied: “I was born near the church of the most holy Theotokos, and here I shall die.”\* The soldiers and Boxers returned shortly, and the valiant woman ended her life in martyrdom, considering death to be but the passage to a place of blessed repose.

Describing their death, Archimandrite Avraamy adds: “Grant rest, O Lord, to the souls of Thy servants, the priest Mitrofan and those with him, and make their memory to be eternal.” And let us join in this prayer, that they find rest “where the righteous repose,” for by their confession and martyrdom they have been like unto the righteous and have been added to their number.

Among those who suffered for Jesus Christ were Albazinians, descendants of the famous residents of Albazin who carried the light of Christ’s Orthodox faith to Peking, the capital of China, in 1685, and remained faithful to it. Because of their fidelity to Holy Orthodoxy, the Lord rewarded their descendants with the glory of confession and martyrdom. The Albazinians Kliment Kui Kin, Matfei Hai Tsuan, his brother Vit, Anna Chui, and many others, not fearing those “who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul”

\* The original “Nikolsky” Church had for a time been officially named for the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos. See p. 17 above.

heavy indemnities that the Japanese exacted, had brought great hardships to Shantung. Then in 1897, as a last outrage, Germany, which had been using its missionaries in Shantung to create a foothold, seized the Bay of Kiaochow and made Shantung province its sphere of influence. Britain, France, Russia, and Japan immediately followed suit and seized ports and territories for themselves, in what China scholars call the “Scramble for Concessions” and what the Chinese called “Carving up the Melon.”

After this, the power of the missionaries and their converts—and the humiliations and injustices they inflicted on the non-Christian Chinese—grew noticeably. In 1898 the Yellow River overflowed its banks, and the consequent flooding ruined many crops in Shantung. In 1899 Shantung suffered famine, and anti-Catholic incidents also increased. At the same time, loose associations of so-called “Spirit Boxers” were appearing with great frequency.

Martial arts societies were a common phenomenon with a long history in Shantung, and had proliferated in recent years as local militias sprang up both to counter rising social disorder and to champion non-Christian Chinese against the missionaries. The origins of the Spirit Boxers remain obscure and disputed. But what distinguished them from other martial arts societies was their initiation rites, which granted any neophyte almost immediate possession by a god of the Chinese folk pantheon, which god would bestow upon him supernatural invulnerability to weapons.<sup>21</sup> Although other mar-

<sup>21</sup> The following is recorded by Weale in his entry for 28th May, 1900: “All the European engineers have fled into Peking; and, worst of all, the Boxer banners have been unfurled; and lo and behold, as they floated in the breeze, the four dread characters, ‘*Pao Ch’ing Mien Yang*,’ have been read on blood-red bunting—‘Death and destruction to the foreigner and all his works and loyal support to the great Ching dynasty.’ Is that sufficiently enthralling, or should I add that the invulnerability of the Boxer has been officially and indisputably tested by the Manchus, according to the gossip of the day? Proceeding to the Boxer camp at Chochou, duly authorised officials of the Crown have seen recruits, who have performed all the dread rites, and are initiated, stand fearlessly in front of a full-fledged Boxer; have seen that Boxer load up his blunderbuss with powder, ramming down a wad on top; have witnessed a handful of iron buckshot added, but with no wad to hold the charge in place; have noticed that the master Boxer ges-

tial arts societies had not been without their darker esotericism, among the egalitarian Spirit Boxers the “indwelling of a god” was not limited to its leaders and past masters, but was accessible to all who joined, and this indwelling was achieved after not years or even months, but after a few days of training. As their ranks swelled, they sought legitimacy for themselves by assuming the name of an already established society, “Boxers United in Righteousness,” and it was under this name that they became known as the report of them went beyond Shantung.

Offering magical invulnerability, promising the immediate descent of a god at initiation, and feeding on hatred of the missionaries, the Boxer movement quickly spread throughout Shantung. A recent study of the Boxers argues convincingly that, contrary to the conventional image of them, the Boxers began not as an anti-foreign but as a specifically anti-Catholic movement.<sup>22</sup> The only real contact with foreigners that the vast majority of Chinese peasants had was with their missionaries, who penetrated where no foreign diplomat or commander ever ventured.<sup>23</sup> Although much anti-foreign sentiment was generated throughout China as the country was dismembered and distributed among outsiders, the soil on which the Boxers flourished was personal resentment against missionary injustices, and the need felt for an effective local response to them.

By 1899 the Boxers had begun attacking Chinese Catholics in Shantung province, and the government was confronted with the dilemma of how to deal with the swiftly rising movement. The Boxers’ characteristic slogan was “Support the Ch’ing [dynasty], ticutated with his lethal weapon the better to impress his audience before he fired, but have not noticed that the iron buckshot tripped merrily out of the rusty barrel since no wad held it in place; and finally, when the fire-piece belched forth flames and ear-breaking noise at a distance of a man’s body from the recruit’s person, they have seen, and with them thousands of others, that no harm came. It is astounding, miraculous, but it is true; henceforth, the Boxer is officially invulnerable and must remain so as long as the ground is parched. That is what our Chinese reports say.” (pp. 16–17). To appreciate this last allusion to the parched ground, see discussion of the drought of 1900 on p. 21.

<sup>22</sup> See Esherick in Bibliography.

<sup>23</sup> Cohen also stresses this point.

slaughtered. Fr. Mitrophan sat in the yard before his home, and the Boxers stabbed his chest repeatedly, until it was like a honeycomb; he fell beneath a date tree. His neighbors dragged his body away to the place where the Mission’s almshouse had been. Later, Hieromonk Avraamy took up the body, and, in 1903, when a feast was first celebrated in honor of the martyrs, it was interred beneath the altar of the church of the martyrs along with the remains of others. Fr. Mitrophan’s wife, Tatiana, and three sons were at the site of his murder. The second son, Sergei, later became an archpriest; the other two, Isaiah and Ioann, were murdered.

Tatiana was forty-four years of age. On the evening of June 10/23, she escaped the Boxers with the help of her son Isaiah’s fiancée, but the next morning she was seized with eighteen other people, taken outside the Andinmin gates to the Boxer camp at Hsiao-in-Fang, and then beheaded. Isaiah was twenty-three and served in the artillery. The Boxers executed him by beheading on June 7/20, as it was known beforehand that he was a Christian. Ioann was only seven years old.\* On the evening of June 10/23, when they murdered Fr. Mitrophan, the Boxers severed his arms at the shoulder and cut off his toes, nose and ears. His brother Isaiah’s fiancée succeeded in saving Ioann’s life. The next morning he sat naked and unshod at the doorway, and when people asked him if he were in pain, he replied that he was not. Street urchins mocked him, calling him a “follower of the devils,”<sup>4</sup> but he retorted: “I am a believer in God, and not a follower of the devils.” Ioann asked his neighbors for some water, but they not only refused him, but even drove him away. Protasy Chan and Rodion Hsiu, who had not yet been baptized, bore witness that they saw this boy wounded in shoulder and foot; his wounds were inches deep, yet he felt no pain and, again taken by the Boxers, displayed no fear, going quietly with them. One

\* This is the “eight-year old boy, Ivan Tzi, the son of a martyred priest,” mentioned above. Since the Chinese reckoning considers a new-born child to be one year old, he would have been eight years old according to the Chinese reckoning, and seven according to the Western.

<sup>4</sup> “devils” — an epithet commonly leveled at all non-Chinese, especially at Europeans.

translating and proofreading the service books. In the course of fifteen years he served God tirelessly, enduring much injury and abuse from his own people and from outsiders, and eventually went slightly daft. Thereafter, he lived for more than three years outside the Mission, receiving half his previous salary. Throughout his life as a priest, Fr. Mitrophan was not avaricious, and many took advantage of him on this account.

On the evening of June 1/14, 1900, the Boxers burned down the Mission buildings and many Christians, hiding themselves from the perils that confronted them, gathered at Fr. Mitrophan's home. Now among these were several who had formerly been ill-disposed towards the priest and yet he did not turn them away. Perceiving that some were faint-hearted, he encouraged them, saying that the time of misfortune had arrived and that it would be difficult to escape. Several times each day he went out to look at the burned-out church. At 10 o'clock in the evening, on June 10/23, soldiers and Boxers surrounded Fr. Mitrophan's residence. At that time there were more than seventy Christians there; the stronger fled, while Fr. Mitrophan and many others, primarily women and children, remained and were

native Orthodox Christians were found worthy of ordination. In 1879, the Japanese Mission was elevated to the rank of diocese, Fr. Nikolai being consecrated as its first bishop. From this time on the number of baptisms increased to an average of one thousand per year, so that by 1910, there were nearly 32,000 native Orthodox Christians in Japan, twenty-eight priests, seven deacons, and one hundred fifty-one catechetical instructors. Despite the pressures of the Russo-Japanese War, Bishop Nikolai remained at his post, striving by his conduct to demonstrate that the Church is non-political. The efforts made to translate the Sacred Scriptures and the divine services into Japanese during his tenure form the basis of the worship of the present-day Church of Japan (granted "autonomy" by the Moscow Patriarchate in 1970). In 1911, the fiftieth anniversary of Archbishop Nikolai's arrival in Japan was celebrated with festivity, though his strength had been declining for some time. On January 7, 1912, he officiated at the divine liturgy for the last time; and nearly one month later, on February 16, 1912, he reposed in the Hospital of the Holy Spirit, with the word "Resurrection" on his lips. The funeral liturgy was conducted in Japanese in the presence of an enormous number of native believers. By special permission of the Japanese government, the remains of the "Apostle to Japan" were permitted to be buried whole, rather than cremated.

destroy the foreign [with "religion" probably understood]"; yet Peking could hardly have felt at ease watching a popular uprising grow out of control, and there were skirmishes between Boxers and government troops.<sup>24</sup>

In fact, the Manchu Court was divided over whether to tolerate the Boxers and vacillated as the movement grew, until it had grown too large and too bold to stop. The spring of 1900 brought an extended drought to the neighboring provinces of Shantung and Chihli, the latter having Peking as its capital. As Esherick observes:

. . . peasants can do nothing to fight a drought but wait, and pray for rain. Waiting makes men restless—especially young men—and it is no great surprise that many young men filled their idle days by going to watch the Boxers practice, becoming interested, and joining the new association. And praying: when prayers are not answered, people begin to ask why. The Boxers had a ready answer: the Christians had offended the gods. Early in 1900, a missionary recorded the following placard, which had been "posted everywhere in the North of China, including cities, towns and villages":

"On account of the Protestant and Catholic religions the Buddhist gods are oppressed, and the sages thrust into the background. The law of Buddha is no longer respected, and the Five Relationships [of Confucian ethics] are disregarded. The anger of Heaven and Earth has been aroused and the timely rain has consequently been withheld from us. But Heaven is now sending down eight million spiritual soldiers to extirpate these foreign religions, and when this has been done there will be a timely rain."

And thus resentment of the Christians increased—and with it support for the Boxers, until county after county report-

<sup>24</sup> Something of the ambiguous relations between the Boxers and the Manchu government may be indicated by noting that other, less widespread Boxer slogans included "Destroy the Manchus and restore the Chinese," "Oppose the Ch'ing and support the Ming; drive out the foreigners," etc. ("Recent Chinese Studies of the Boxer Movement," p. 118)

ed boxing grounds as numerous as “trees in a forest,” and sympathy for the Boxer cause appeared almost universal in the villages of the north China plain.<sup>25</sup>

It should be noted that the movement is directed at Christians in particular and not yet at foreigners in general. Esherick also observes that even before beginning to kill Chinese Christians, the Boxers often commanded them “to renounce the foreign religion or pay a ransom.”<sup>26</sup>

By May of 1900 posters demanding the death of the foreigners and their converts were appearing in Peking, native Christians were being slain along the road to Peking from the south, and Boxer camps were springing up in Peking itself. On June 14 (N.S.), the Boxers ran through Peking pillaging, burning, and slaying the Christians they found. It was on this day that they also burned down the buildings of the Russian Mission in the northeast corner of the city, although it is not recorded that any members of the Mission were then slain.

Whatever ambivalence the throne might once have had towards the Boxers, when the siege of the foreign legations began in earnest on June 20, Imperial troops fought side by side with the Boxers. On the same day, Father Mitrophan’s twenty-three old son, Isaiah, who served in the artillery and was known to be a Christian, was beheaded. Three days later Father Mitrophan himself was slain together with several members of his flock, and on the day following, Father Mitrophan’s wife Tatiana and youngest son John were also slain with many others in the Mission.

The Boxer seige of the foreign legations in Peking, having begun on June 20, lasted 55 days, until the allied troops of eight nations entered Peking and drove the Boxers out.

### *From an eyewitness account*

Whatever merely political or economic causes had helped insti-

<sup>25</sup> Esherick, pp. 281–82.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 245–46.

The priest Mitrophan, whose Chinese name was Tsi-Chung, was born on December 10/23, 1855, lost his father early in his childhood and was raised under the care of his grandmother, Ekaterina, and his mother, Marina, a teacher in a school for girls. Now at that time he experienced much grief. When Archimandrite Pallady was head of the Mission for a second time, he instructed his teacher, Lung Yuan, to teach Mitrophan with special attention, to prepare him to receive the priesthood in due course. Before he had reached the age of twenty he was appointed to the position of catechist. Mitrophan was peace-loving and tranquil; even when he was grievously offended, he never sought to justify himself. Archimandrite Pallady’s successor was Archimandrite Flavian, who was later Metropolitan of Kiev. From his very arrival in Peking, Archimandrite Pallady charged him, as he had the teacher Lung Yuan, to aid Mitrophan in achieving his destiny (i.e. the priesthood). Mitrophan did not wish to take upon himself the rank of priest, and continually refused, saying: “How can a man with little aptitude and virtue dare take upon himself this great rank?” But, compelled by Archimandrite Flavian and persuaded by his instructor, he assented, although he knew that after accepting the priesthood his end would not be pleasant. And so, at the age of twenty-five he was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Nikolai (Kasatkin) of Japan.<sup>3</sup> Under Archimandrite Flavian’s tenure, Fr. Mitrophan served as his aide in

<sup>3</sup> *Bishop Nikolai of Japan* — Ivan Kasatkin was born in 1836 in the village of Beresovo, in the Smolensk district, the son of the local deacon. On completion of his studies at the Smolensk Seminary he entered the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, completing its course of study in 1860. At the age of twenty-four he received the monastic tonsure with the name Nikolai. Shortly thereafter he was ordained hierodeacon and hieromonk. During a tour of duty in Siberia, the young missionary was personally blessed by Bishop Innokenty (Veniaminov) of Kamchatka (later Metropolitan of Moscow, recently canonized by the Moscow Patriarchate). In June of 1861, Hieromonk Nikolai was assigned to the Russian diplomatic mission to Japan. The young cleric set himself the formidable task of learning the complicated Japanese language, and within a few years was able to make several converts to Holy Orthodoxy. By 1870, Father Nikolai was raised to the rank of archimandrite and appointed head of the newly-formed Japanese Mission. More baptisms followed as Fr. Nikolai’s converts began to spread the Holy Faith, despite the persecution raised against them. Thus, by 1878, several



hold of the unfortunate Christians and tortured them, forcing them to renounce Christ. Terrified of torture and death, many did renounce Orthodoxy to save their lives and burned incense before idols. But others courageously confessed Christ, not fearing the torments. Their fate was terrible. The pagans ripped open their stomachs, chopped off their heads, burned them alive in their homes. Searches for and the slaughtering of Christians continued throughout all the subsequent days of the uprising. After the destruction of the Christians' homes, they themselves were led out of the city gates to the Boxers' pagan temples, where they were subjected to interrogation and immolated in fires. According to the testimony of pagan eyewitnesses, several of the Orthodox Christians met death with amazing self-denial. Pavel Wan, an Orthodox catechist, died with prayer on his lips. Ia Wen, a teacher at the mission school, was tortured twice. The first time, the Boxers hacked at her unmercifully and cast her to the ground half dead. When she regained consciousness, one of the pagan guards heard her groans and took her to his hut. But shortly thereafter the Boxers again laid hold of her, and this time tortured her to death. Both times Ia Wen confessed Christ joyfully before her tormentors. After the horrible events of the first night, the Chinese Christians found an eight-year old boy, Ivan Tzi, the son of a martyred priest, who had been brutally maimed by the Boxers. His arms had been cut off and deep gashes were cut into his chest. When these Chinese asked him if he was in pain, the boy replied with a smile that it was not hard to suffer for Christ. Later, the Boxers again took this child-martyr and chopped off his head, burning his remains in a bonfire. . ."

Among the Chinese martyrs and confessors of Christ, the priest Mitrophan Tsi-Chung and his family are especially renowned.

nected with Jiu Jitzu. Mouthing such slogans as, "Protect the country, destroy the foreigners," the Boxers began to persecute native Chinese Christians by autumn of 1899. In early June of 1900 an unsuccessful attempt by the major European powers to bolster existing troops in Peking aggravated the situation, and when, on June 17, they seized the Taku forts to open the way to Peking and Tientsin, the empress ordered all foreigners slain. The carnage, which encompassed scores of Western diplomats and missionaries, continued until late 1900.

gate the rebellion, whatever merely xenophobic hatred had inspired the reign of terror, it was ultimately directed at Christianity as much as at the foreigner, and no native Chinese Christian that did not renounce his faith could hope to escape a bitter death. The following passages, from Bertram Simpson's *Indiscreet Letters from Peking*, which he wrote under the pseudonym B. L. Putnam Weale, give a part of his description of the Boxer siege of the foreign legations and their occupation of Peking. To any that might consider it inappropriate to venerate as martyrs such Chinese members of the Russian Mission as, they think, were random victims of blind xenophobia, what follows will show clearly the spiritual nature of the persecutions: the forcing of native converts to renounce Christianity had been the Boxers' object before it became the ousting of the foreigners.

After the initial Boxer attack of June 14 had subsided, giving way to sporadic acts of violence, Simpson, with others, left the barricaded legation quarter on June 16, looking for survivors.

The Boxers had been calmly butchering all people who seemed to them to be Christians. . . Numbers had already been massacred, and several lanes looked like veritable shambles. The stench of human blood in the hot June air was almost intolerable, and the sights more than we could bear. Men, women and children lay indiscriminately heaped together, some hacked to pieces, other with their throats cut from ear to ear, some still moving, others quite motionless.<sup>27</sup>

The allied forces that eventually chased the Boxers out of Peking on August 15 then began a general sack of the city. Simpson, at the head of a group of Chinese Catholics, could not resist participating in the shameless looting in the days that followed. Having assembled a number of pony carts to explore the city, Simpson says,

Our little cavalcade was clattering along midst these strange surroundings, when my attention was attracted by the similarity of the occupation which now appeared to be engag-

<sup>27</sup> Weale, p. 71.

ing numbers of people on the side streets. The occupation was plainly a doubtful one, since as soon as we were seen every one fled indoors. All had been standing scraping away at the door-posts with any instruments which came handy; and one could hear this scratching and screeching distinctly in the distance as one approached. It was extraordinary. Determined to solve this new mystery, on an inspiration I suddenly drove my old pony full tilt up an alleyway before the rest of my men had come in view, and, dashing quickly forward, secured one old man before he could escape. Once again I understood: all these people had been scraping off little diamond-shaped pieces of red paper pasted on their door-posts; and on these papers were written a number of characters, which proclaimed adherence of all the inmates to the tenets of the Boxers. In their few weeks' reign, this Chinese sansculottism had succeeded in imposing its will on all. Everyone was implicated; the whole city had been in their hands; it had been an enormous plot . . .<sup>28</sup>

Soon after this,

The big Shantung recruit [a Chinese Catholic who had joined them] . . . was now once again plainly excited and smelled quarry. I remembered, then, that there was nothing very strange in the decisive actions of all my followers; they were being led by this man and told exactly what to do. He had, after all, been outside all the time, and knew what had been going on and where now to strike hard! Quickly, without speaking a word, he pushed ahead, and arriving at the big gates of another inn, loudly called on some one inside to open. He could not have got any very satisfactory answer, for the next thing I saw was that he had sprung like lightning from his stolen pony, had thrown his rifle to the ground, and was attacking a latticed window with an old bayonet he had been carrying in his hand. With half a dozen furious blows he sent the woodwork into splinters, and, springing up with a lithe, tiger-like jump, he clambered through the gap, big man as he was,

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 333–34.

## The First Chinese Orthodox Martyrs\*

THE DEVELOPING CONCEPTS of humanism and the lofty achievements of culture, it would seem, ought to have completely done away with all the perfidious horrors of the Middle Ages and rendered a repetition of St. Bartholomew's Eve<sup>1</sup> impossible. Yet just such a massacre did take place in China at the turn of this century. Its victims were the Chinese Orthodox, who showed themselves to be radiant confessors of Jesus Christ and martyrs for Him. This took place during the "Boxer Rebellion" of 1900. Two who were eyewitnesses to these atrocities were Archimandrite (later Metropolitan) Innokenty, head of the Orthodox Ecclesiastical Mission at Peking, and Archimandrite Avraamy, who wrote a moving account of and panegyric on the repose of several of the martyrs. Archimandrite Innokenty described this horrible atrocity as follows:

"The day on which most of the Orthodox Chinese in Peking were martyred was June 11/24, 1900. The evening before, proclamations were posted along the streets, calling upon the pagans to slaughter the Christians and threatening anyone who dared harbor them. On the night of June 11/24–12/25, the Boxers<sup>2</sup> attacked Christian homes with blazing torches in all quarters of Peking, laid

\* This article first appeared in *Orthodox Life*, Jordanville, New York, Vol. 29, No. 1 (January–February 1979), pp. 14–18, and is reprinted here by kind permission of the editor. Translated from the Russian by Michael Amelchenya; original source: *Chinese Herald*, June, 1935. The numbered footnotes, and that at the end, are in the original.

<sup>1</sup> *St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre*—a massacre of Protestants which began on the eve of St. Bartholomew's Day, August 24, 1572. It was ordered by King Charles IX of France at the instigation of the Queen Mother, Catherine de Medicis. Estimates as to the number of victims for the whole of France vary according to confessional allegiance—one Roman Catholic scholar, Jean Novi de Caveirac, estimated only 2,000 were slain, whereas the Huguenot Duc de Sully, a contemporary, placed the number of dead as high as 70,000.

<sup>2</sup> *Boxers* — In 1898 and 1899 the Chinese government, led by the Dowager Empress Tz'u-hsi, in an attempt to protect the realm from foreign aggressions, ordered the revival of the village militia. The members of several secret societies entered these bands of militia. These secret societies practised arcane rites which, they believed, would make them invulnerable to bullets. There is every indication that the rites practised by these "Boxers," as the Europeans called them, were con-

Peking.

Weale, B. L. Putnam. *Indiscreet Letters from Peking, Being the Notes of an Eye-witness, which set forth in some detail, from day to day, the real story of the siege and sack of a distressed capital in 1900—the year of great tribulation*. Dodd, Mead and Company, 1907.

Widmer, Eric. *The Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in Peking During the Eighteenth Century*. Harvard University Press, 1976.



with surprising agility. Then there was a dead silence for a few seconds and we waited in suspense. But presently oaths and protests came from far back and drew nearer and nearer, until I knew that the some one who had refused to answer had been duly secured. The gates themselves were finally flung open, and I saw that an oldish man of immense stature had been driven to do this work—a man who, so far from being afraid, was only held in check by a loaded revolver being kept steadily at his back. . . I was at a loss to understand the scene.

Our captured carts were driven in and the gates securely shut; and then, driving his captive still in front of him, my man led us, with a rapidity that showed that he knew every inch of his ground, to a big building at the side. Then it was my turn to understand and to stare. Within the building a big altar had been clumsily made of wooden boards and draped with blood-red cloth; and lining the wall behind it was a row of hideously-painted wooden Buddhas. There were sticks of incense, too, with inscriptions written in the same manner as those we had seen being scraped so feverishly from the door-posts a few minutes ago. Red sashes and rusty swords lay on the ground also. Here there could be absolutely no mistake; it was a headquarters of that evil cult which had brought such ruin and destruction in its train. The Boxers had been in full force here.

The Shantung man, for reasons I could not yet unravel and did not care to learn, had become absolutely livid with rage now, and the others, who were all Catholics, shared his fury. They said that here converts had been tortured to death—killed by being slit into small pieces and then burned. Everybody knew it.<sup>29</sup>

The headquarters of every Boxer division was defined by its tan or altar.<sup>30</sup> Before these Boxer altars Chinese Christians were ordered

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, p. 335–36.

<sup>30</sup> Esherick, p. 231; “Recent Chinese Studies of the Boxer Movement,” p. 101. “According to figures in this period of greatest activity [late Spring, 1900], ‘there were more than 800 altars (*tan*) [set up in Peking], and if each had 100 members,

to offer incense to idols or die horribly. Archimandrite Innocent bears witness that some members of the Russian Mission did indeed offer incense to save their lives; and also that those of the Mission who were tortured and slain had been interrogated first. They had had the opportunity to save themselves by renouncing Christ—but refused to do so. The Church has never tarried to honor such persons with the name of Martyr.

### *The Russian Mission after 1900*

Two hundred twenty-two members of the Russian Mission were martyred by the Boxers, and its buildings burned. In 1901 Archimandrite Innocent was summoned to Petrograd, made a report to the Holy Synod, was consecrated to the episcopacy, and returned to Peking in August 1902 to restore the Mission as its first bishop. That he was willing to return to a labor left in ruins by the Boxers, and even succeeded in making the Mission greater than it had ever been, shows his love and devotion to the Chinese Orthodox Christians. With indemnities paid by the Chinese government, the Mission was restored; on the site where the martyrs had been slain, a new church was built in 1903 in their honor, called “The Church of All the Holy Martyrs,” in which were placed the relics of many of them, including Saint Mitrophan. Not long after their martyrdom, they were glorified by the Holy Synod of the Russian Church, which was itself soon to be called to witness for Christ with its own blood.

In his essay on the Mission published in 1916, Archimandrite Innocent reported,

Since 1900 it has seemed that the special blessing of God is upon the work of the Mission. Places for preaching have been opened through nearly all China. In central Yungpingfu, in the province of Chihli, property with some buildings was bought, and a church and school erected. In the same province a

there were 80,000 Boxers.’ The official estimates were ‘not less than 100,000.’” (*Ibid.*, p. 122).

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*Threskeutike kai Ethnike Enkyklopaideia* (“Religious and National Encyclopedia”). Athens, 1965, Vol. 7, columns 564–581; on China, dealing largely with the Russian Ecclesiastical Mission in

beginning to burn steadily; yet burst finally into a blaze of over two hundred holy martyrs, whose love for Christ was stronger than death.

That the Holy Spirit loved them, and dwelt in them, and gave them strength like the ancient martyrs for sufferings beyond nature, little John Tsi, Father Mitrophan's seven-year-old son, testifies for them all. For when his arms, nose, ears, and toes had been cut off, he replied with a smile to them that asked if he were in pain, "It is not hard to suffer for Christ." Through them, God bears witness that He takes pleasure not in time or place, or in tongue or tribe, but He is well pleased in them that fear Him, and in them that hope in His mercy.<sup>35</sup> They were willing to suffer the persecution that the Apostle promises to all who will live godly in Christ Jesus,<sup>36</sup> and are now fervent intercessors for the Orthodox of the last days who, like them, are strangers in their native lands. By their prayers, O God, save our souls.

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<sup>35</sup> Psalm 146:12.

<sup>36</sup> II Tim. 3:12.

Chinese priest opened about twenty new places for the preaching of the Gospel. . . .

At the present time the Russian Orthodox Mission in China is composed of the following establishments: Monastery of Assumption in Peking; Hermitage of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on the Western Hills near Peking; Nunnery in Peking; five conventual churches in Petrograd, Moscow, Harbin, Dalny and in Manchuria which support the Mission in China; nineteen churches, four of them in Peking, one in the suburbs of Petrograd and the rest in the conventual and missionary districts. The total number of mission churches is thirty-two. Of these, fourteen are in the province of Chihli, twelve in Hupeh, four in Honan, one in Tsian-fu and one in Mongolia. The Mission supports three chapels and five churchyards. It is in possession of forty-six pieces of property which have been either bought by the Mission or presented to it. There are seventeen schools for boys and three for girls under the control of the Mission, also one Theological Seminary in Peking. Other establishments maintained by the Mission are: meteorological station, library (recently built), printing office (with more than a hundred volumes of Chinese publications), lithographic works, galvanoplastical establishment, type foundry, book binder's shop, paint shop, carpenter's shop, casting foundry, steam flour mill, candle factory, soap factory, weaver's workshop, bee-hive, dairy house and brick-kiln.

The Mission has thirty-three male teachers in its schools, four of whom are Russians, and five lady teachers, one of whom is Russian. The total enrollment of boys and girls exceeds 680. During 1915, 583 Chinese were baptized. The total number of baptized Chinese is 5,587.<sup>31</sup>

The Dowager Empress died in 1908; in 1911 the Manchu dynasty, and with it, two thousand years of imperial rule, came to an end; for nearly forty years China went through the periods of the

<sup>31</sup> Archimandrite Innocent, pp. 684-85.

Republic, the warlords, and the civil wars.

In April of 1920, the holy relics of the Royal Martyrs slain at Alapaevsk were recovered and brought to Peking, where they were buried at the Russian cemetery of Saint Seraphim of Sarov. Later that same year, the relics of the martyred Grand Duchess Elizabeth and the nun Barbara were transferred thence to Jerusalem, where they arrived in December, 1920, and were placed in the Church of Saint Mary Magdalene in Gethsemane Convent on the Mount of Olives. In 1927 the relics of the rest of the martyrs of Alapaevsk, Grand Duke Sergei Mikhailovich, the Princes John, Constantine, and Igor Constantinovich, Prince Vladimir Paley, and Theodore Remez, were transferred to the church of "All the Holy Martyrs" built for the Chinese Martyrs in 1903.<sup>32</sup> At the side of martyrs that were her native children, the Peking Mission now gave hospitality to martyrs that came from the foreign land that had brought her the Gospel. After her first bishop, Metropolitan Innocent, reposed in the Lord on June 13/26, 1931, he also was buried, to the right of the altar, in the church of his martyred spiritual children, for whom he had labored so greatly.

In 1935, two Englishmen visited Peking, and in describing their visit, limited themselves to the following sketch of the Mission:

This part of the city was originally occupied by the Albazin prisoners whom the Emperor K'ang Hsi brought to Peking in 1685. Albazin was a small Cossack settlement on the Amur River whose inhabitants were constantly raiding Chinese territory, until the Emperor sent a special expedition to suppress them. The prisoners, amongst whom were thirty or forty Russians including a priest, were given land and a small temple in this north-eastern quarter of the city close to the present Mission grounds. Later on, permission was granted for priests to be sent to them to attend to their spiritual needs, and these formed the nucleus of the North Hostel. The Albazins themselves intermarried with the Manchus and in the course of time

<sup>32</sup> See Shaiditsky in Bibliography.

became indistinguishable from the rest of the population. They remained attached to the Orthodox Church and there are, it is claimed, families bearing Russian names still living in this district. . .

The grounds, though extensive, contain little of historical interest because all the old buildings were completely destroyed during the Boxer outbreak in 1900, when several hundreds of the native Christians were murdered, many of them being thrown down the well that is still to be seen in the garden. In the north-east part of the grounds is a Memorial Chapel to the victims. After 1900 the property was considerably enlarged, and new buildings erected which are totally different from those destroyed by the Boxers. The monks have a flour mill, dairy, bee-hives, and a printing-press.<sup>33</sup>

Until the Communists gained control of China in 1949, such cities as Peking, Harbin, and Shanghai were centers for Russian refugees of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. These Orthodox colonies boasted such spiritual leaders as Blessed John Maximovitch and Metropolitan Philaret (the then Father George) of blessed memory, and even the non-Christian Chinese had veneration for these hierarchs and their pious flocks.<sup>34</sup>

It is to the glory of the Chinese Orthodox that they were counted worthy to inaugurate the numberless martyrdoms of Orthodox Christians in the twentieth century. Though the Mission in Peking never had the presence of a great missionary saint to prosper it, such as Saint Stephen of Perm, Saint Innocent of Irkutsk, or Saint Herman of Alaska, God Himself visited His vine, and perfected that which His right hand had planted. The Mission began not in the deliberate evangelic designs of churchmen, but as it were a random spark kindled by the clash of two expanding empires; had flickered dimly for a century and a half, always near to being quenched, before

<sup>33</sup> Arlington and Lewisohn, pp. 177-178.

<sup>34</sup> See, for example, "God is Near," an account of the miraculous renewal of church and icons in Harbin, *Orthodox Life*, November-December 1956, pp. 9-19.